



## Preparedness News and Information

From FEMA's Office of National Preparedness

July 18, 2003

### NATIONAL NEWS

#### **Officials Demo Technology in Emergency Drill**

*GovExec, July 11, 2003*

In an emergency drill, federal and regional experts showed how new software can be used to coordinate the work of police, fire and emergency medical personnel during a train derailment involving hazardous materials.

#### **Interpol Chief Warns on Terror Readiness**

*Associated Press, July 15, 2003*

While traditional anti-terrorism defenses involve restricting access to buildings and increasing searches of people and property, such techniques are ineffective against terrorists wielding biological weapons.

#### **Cold War Era Sirens May be Revived**

*Arkansas City Traveler, July 16, 2003*

Sirens have long been used for storm disasters, but now the Federal Emergency Management Agency is studying whether they can warn people of biological, chemical or nuclear attacks.

- [Disaster Sirens could be Used to Warn of Terrorist Attack](#), *San Mateo County Times*, July 17
- [Retrofit for '50s-era sirens?](#), *Post and Courier*, July 15

#### **System Pushes Emergency Alert**

*Federal Computer Week, July 11, 2003*

A new emergency alert system is using "push" communications to send warnings and messages from federal, state or local governments directly to constituents via the Internet.

#### **Homeland Security Funding Adequate**

*Atlanta Journal Constitution, July 16, 2003*

Michael Brown, Undersecretary for EP&R for the Department of Homeland Security makes the case for how funding provided to first responders in states and local jurisdictions is strengthening the nation as a whole.

#### **Agencies Quizzed on Management of Terror Suspects**

*GovExec, July 16, 2003*

Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee Chairman Saxby Chambliss, expressed concern that information about suspected terrorists was not being shared quickly and effectively between agencies, a fear that arose from a June 18 GAO [report](#).

## **Focus on Smallpox Threat Revived**

*Washington Post, July 17, 2003*

National security experts inside and outside the Bush administration, fearing the president's smallpox immunization program is all but dead, have begun a major public relations campaign to inject new life into a project they describe as vital to homeland protection.

- [CDC: Smallpox May Still Be a Threat](#), *Associated Press*, July 17

## **CONGRESS**

### **House OKs Project to Stockpile Vaccine**

*Associated Press, July 16, 2003*

The House on Wednesday approved the \$5.6 billion Project Bioshield to research, produce, and stockpile vaccines and antidotes in response to the threat of bioterrorist attacks.

- [House Approves Bioterror Defense Bill](#), *Reuters*, July 16
- [House Approves 'Bioshield' bill, but Industry Remains Concerned](#), *GovExec*, July 17

### **Kerry Raps Bush on Home Security**

*MSNBC, July 16, 2003*

Massachusetts's senator John Kerry claims the Bush administration has shortchanged police and firefighters by denying them "the equipment and support to defend America from danger."

## **BILLS RECENTLY INTRODUCED**

- **H.RES.322:** Requesting that the President focus appropriate attention on neighborhood crime prevention and community policing, and coordinate certain Federal efforts to participate in 'National Night Out', including by supporting local efforts and community watch groups and by supporting local officials, to promote community safety and help provide homeland security, *House Judiciary Committee*, July 16

## **RECENT HEARINGS**

- [United States Fire Administration Authorization Act of 2003](#), House Committee on Science, July 17
- [First Responders: How States, Localities and the Federal Government Can Strengthen Their Partnership to Make America Safer](#), House Select Homeland Security Committee, July 17

## **STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES**

### **NY Says its Shortchanged on Security**

*Newsday, July 15, 2003*

New York officials are assailing a plan they say will distribute nearly \$2 billion in federal Homeland Security money by giving rural states much more per capita than high-threat areas like New York.

### **Facilities Get System to Detect Anthrax**

*Washington Times, July 15, 2003*

The U.S. Postal Service yesterday expanded tests of a new anthrax-detection system to 15 mailing facilities around the nation, including two in the Washington area.

### **Subway Cops get Gas Masks**

*NY Post, July 14, 2003*

Cops who respond to subway terror threats have been equipped with military-style gas masks so they can withstand a possible chemical or biological attack and help treat and evacuate passengers.

### **Bioterror Self-Triage Helps Hopes to Avert Panic**

*Washington Post, July 14, 2003*

Bioterrorism experts are developing a do-it-yourself triage system in an attempt to prevent panicky crowds from overwhelming Washington area hospital emergency rooms during an epidemic or terror attack.

### **City Police and Fire Department Pledge Cooperation in Disasters**

*NY Times, July 12, 2003*

Reversing positions they took in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terror attack, New York City's police and fire commissioners said yesterday that they had agreed to adopt formal rules for how emergency agencies should work together in responding to major disasters.

### **Experts Question Bioterror Detection Gear**

*Belleville News Democrat, July 16, 2003*

At secret locations in at least 31 cities, the government has deployed devices that scour the air for deadly agents like anthrax and smallpox with hopes of sniffing out bioterrorism, but the effort has been viewed with skepticism.

### **Hamilton County, Ohio Goes Online with Next Phase of Motorola ...**

*FN, July 16, 2003*

Hamilton County, Ohio will go online today with the second phase of its \$30 million communications system from Motorola, and for the first time, make communications possible among all public safety agencies in the county and in neighboring jurisdictions.

### **Boy Scouts Plan Homeland Security Training Program**

*Tri-Town News, July 17, 2003*

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is supporting the Boy Scouts of America in developing a campaign to help citizens across the country prepare for emergencies of all kinds through the "Emergency Preparedness BSA" initiative.

### **Preparing for Bioterrorism**

*Leader-Union, July 16, 2003*

Representatives of Fayette County local law enforcement, firefighting, emergency medical services and disaster assistance agencies who would be working together in the event of a bio-terrorism event, gathered to discuss the state's planning, training, preparedness and response activities.

### **Officials: We're Not Ready for an Attack**

*Gloucester County Times, July 17, 2003*

Gloucester County Emergency Response Director, Thomas Butts, said because there has been a restructuring of government since Sept. 11, there has been a lot of bureaucratic red tape involved with getting money to pay for local responders' equipment.

### **Parish Sets Up Office of Emergency Preparedness**

*Daily World, July 16, 2003*

St. Landry Parish is in the process of setting up its first full-time Office of Emergency Preparedness that will allow the parish to be prepared to respond to everything from a terrorist attack to a chemical spill.

### **State Security Director Urges Teamwork**

*Pocono Record, July 17, 2003*

Pennsylvania's homeland security director brought a cautionary message to the Northeast Pennsylvania Emergency Response Group Counter-Terrorism Task Force urging emergency responders and elected officials from different regions throughout the state to work together to prevent and combat terror or natural disaster that might occur.

### **Giuliani Promotes Indian Pt. Terror Drill**

*NY Times, July 17, 2003*

Rudolph W. Giuliani, the former New York City mayor, visited Westchester County today to speak on behalf of one of his new clients, Entergy Nuclear Northeast, as it prepares for an antiterrorism drill at its Indian Point nuclear power complex.

## **RELATED INFORMATION**

### **RECENT REPORTS**

- [Border Security: New Policies and Increased Interagency Coordination Needed to Improve Visa Process](#), GAO-03-1013T, July 2003

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The information contained in this newsletter was collected from Internet sources. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the official position of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Office of National Preparedness.